

BECCA FRANCE

SARRE

The village of Thouraz, on the hill above Sarre, was prospering and the people were rich and happy. All that abundance, however, had made the villagers stingy and distrustful of their neighbours.

One night, a dirty and hungry beggar asked for shelter for the night, but no one took pity on him.

"Go back where you came from!" they all shouted at him mockingly, "You're dirty and sick, don't bother us!"

The poor man, sad and disconsolate at such wickedness, decided to knock on the door of a poor hut and, immediately, a woman answered him, "Come in, you are welcome! We have nothing to feed ourselves, but you will be warm and you can rest in my children's bed."

The peasant woman, who was poor in possessions but not in spirit, welcomed the young man and desperately searched for something to eat, but they had run out of supplies - no one was going to eat dinner that night.

Suddenly, struck by such generosity, the man said to her, "Woman, whose heart is full of love, run to the granary, there you will find plenty of bread for all of us!"

And so it was. The granary was filled with loaves of bread, which the widow brought into the house to feed her little ones and the mysterious traveller.

When the meal was consumed, the man took his rags and, greeting the woman, he said, "You were charitable and deserve to be rewarded. Tomorrow, at this time, Thouraz will be destroyed. Before the sun rises, take your children and run away from here!" He then disappeared into the darkness of the night.

The young woman, frightened by that prophecy, obeyed the beggar and fled, saving her life and that of her children.

The next day, in fact, a terrible landslide came off the Becca France and buried the village of Thouraz and its inhabitants forever.

Taken from: R. SCALISE, A.C. ROVEYAZ, Legends of the Aosta Valley, Aosta, Babel Publisher, 2016